



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

March 25, 2005

**INDIVIDUAL ARRESTED FOR MAKING THREATS AND SOLICITING MURDER
OF MICHAEL SCHIAVO OVER THE INTERNET**

Tampa, Florida - Paul I. Perez, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida and Gretchen C. F. Shappert, United States Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina announced today the arrest of Richard Alan Meywes of Fairview, North Carolina on charges of solicitation of murder and transmission of a threatening communication via interstate commerce. Meywes was charged in a criminal complaint filed today in the United States District Court in Tampa. Meywes was arrested without incident at approximately 5:00 p.m. by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) at his residence. If convicted of both charges, Meywes faces up to 15 years' imprisonment and fines up to \$500,000. Meywes is expected to make his initial appearance in the United States District Court in Asheville, North Carolina on Monday. In the meantime, he will be held in the custody of the United States Marshal.

The affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint alleges that on March 22, 2005, Meywes authored an email stating, among other things, that "[a] bounty with a price

tag of \$250,000 has been taken out on the head of Michael Schiavo.” According to the affidavit, Meywes also stated in the email “that an additional \$50,000 has been offered for the elimination of the judge who ruled against Terry in Florida.” In the email, Meywes refers to a “Judge [] killed in Atlanta a couple of weeks ago, and another Judge in Illinois [whose] husband... and mother [were] killed in what was supposed to be an attempt on her life.”

In commenting on the arrest, Mr. Perez stated, “Mr. Meywes’ use of the internet to convey threats and solicit violent acts is a clear violation of federal law. As federal prosecutors, we must uphold the law and hold persons accountable when they choose to violate it. Regardless of any one person’s stance on the complex and heartfelt issues involved in Ms. Schiavo’s case, the matter must be resolved within the bounds of our democratic system and rule of law. The use of threats and other scare tactics can not and will not be tolerated.”

Ms. Shappert noted, “Threats made in interstate commerce will not be ignored by federal law enforcement.” Shappert credited the success of the investigation to cooperation between federal and local law enforcement in North Carolina and Florida.

This prosecution is the result of a joint investigation by the FBI in Tampa and Charlotte, North Carolina and the Pinellas County, Florida Sheriff’s Office. Assistant United States Attorney Don Gast will handle the court proceedings in Asheville and Assistant United States Attorney Don Hansen will prosecute the case in Tampa.

A complaint is merely an accusation that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.